

WASHINGTON, DC - This morning, U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley delivered the following statement to the House of Representatives regarding "clean" coal and the need for green jobs:

"Mister Speaker, nothing about coal is clean.

From extraction, to waste slurry, to stream contamination in Appalachia – nothing, I repeat, nothing about this energy source is clean.

In order to extract coal from the ground, mountains are literally blasted apart, killing wildlife and destroying forests, contributing to erosion, flooding, and pollution that hits local communities and causes severe health problems.

Over 1,200 miles of streams in Appalachia alone have been buried or completely contaminated because of mountaintop mining.

In order to prepare the coal for burning, an overwhelming amount of water is needed to “clean” the coal. For every ton of coal cleaned 20 to 40 gallons of water are used to wash the coal, creating a sludgy pollutant known as slurry.

Over 90 million gallons of slurry are created every year while harvesting and preparing coal for burning.

Keep in mind, we haven’t even begun to burn the stuff yet.

Green jobs are the key to economic and environmental progress in regions torn by surface and mountaintop mining and struggling economically due to the destruction of the land.

These include jobs in wind, hydroelectric and bio-fuel power.

These jobs will give hard-hit communities a long term future for their families, instead of a short term paycheck in exchange for their quality of life.

Rep. Quigley later referenced that while carbon sequestration has been championed as the mechanism through which “clean coal” can be created, the victory rests on the premise that the carbon sequestered deep in the ground will stay there – and not leak with geological changes over time."